preserve its channel; but how (in Stowe's day) 'the brooke, by means of continuall incroachments upon the banks, and casting of soylage into the stream, was become worse cloyed then ever it was before.' Where that soylage was cast, and where, since the days referred to, so many habitations have arisen that no sign of stream remains visible to the wayfarer above ground, its traces still remain below. Throughout at least a large portion of this district, the subsoil (your surveyor informs me) consists of black mud, the bed of the ancient river, in which are set the foundations of the modern houses. The river, which centuries ago fulfilled for a large population those vile uses which now pollute the Thames, has gradually yielded its foul banks to the residence of a growing population; and the sanitary relations of that population are exactly such as might be imitated, if the volume of the Thames were henceforth slowly reduced, and if those banks of mud which are now exposed only at low water, were simultaneously converted into the site of permanent habitations."

The sentence in the report to be ever kept in view is this, that in spite of all exertions, untimely and preventable death still prevails most largely in the population; and that if the deliberate promises of science be not an empty delusion, it is practicable to reduce human mortality within their jurisdiction to nearly the half of its present prevalence.*

In the present state of the public mind it would be needless to insist upon the fact, that the one great social question, in reference to the material well-being of the labouring classes, is, the state of their dwellings, the supply of water, and other allied circumstances. The rapidly increasing recognition of this great truth, when viewed in connection with the course of recent legislation, plainly evinces that the realization of sanitary reform is a question only of time; its ultimate triumph being assured, humanly speaking, beyond the possibility of doubt. Although, however, the final consummation of that for which, during a long period, a limited number of individuals have never ceased to struggle, is placed beyond the risk of failure,—vigorous, sustained, and influential efforts are demanded to shorten the interval during which the industrious classes —inhabitants of our great cities and towns— will continue subjected to the indescribable and almost inconceivable evils of their lot.

Selfish, but powerful interests, ignorant prejudices, and apathetic indifference, may be expected to obstruct and clog in future, as they have done in the past, the onward course of principles involving the happiness of millions. In face of this combined opposition, it must never be forgotten that the actual sufferers, the industrious workmen of this and other cities, are themselves powerless. The owners of small houses, unfit for human habitation, can make themselves heard, in an adverse spirit, when measures of amelioration are canvassed at parochial boards; the rate-payers can speak in still more authoritative terms, and can bias, if not control, even the legislators from whom the remedial enactments are to come; but the poor artizan, whose family perish around him, and whose energies, on which his daily bread depends, are sapped and undermined in the impure air he is condemned to breathe, finds no organ to proclaim *his* wants, or to rescue *him* from his misery.

There is no public body to which the advocacy of this great question can be entrusted with more promise of successful results than the *Metropolitan Sanitary Association*, including among its members a large number of men whose names are a guarantee to the public that whatever measures they sanction will be deserving of general support, and we do hope that the public will give that assistance to the Association which it needs, and without which it, of course, can do nothing.

It is needful that the public should be reminded of the great evils which are continually smouldering beneath the surface, because former memorable examples prove that men are prone to forget even the most terrible calamities, unless a salutary recollection of them be repeatedly renewed in their minds. It is the special province of this Association to afford such warning, as well as to indicate the legislative measures which are so imperatively demanded; and we feel satisfied they will do their duty if enabled by the provision of funds.

* Mr. Simon suggests the following as *desiderata* in the new Act which the City Commissioners are about to obtain:—

"1. A clause which would give you control over the supply and distribution of water, would enable you to your corporate capacity to contract with any person or any company for the total service of the City, and would authorise you to defray the expenses of such contract by certain specified rates.

2. A clause empowering you to require that every trade or manufacture practised within the City shall be carried on with such precautions, and with such available improvements, from time to time, as shall reduce to the lowest practicable amount whatever nuisance or inconvenience to the neighbourhood is apt to arise therefrom.

3. Such a change in the definition affixed to your 41st clause as would render this operative for the regulation and improvement of a larger number of houses; and such addition to the clause as would enable you, on the joint certificate of your officer of health and surveyor, to enforce the opening of additional windows where requisite for the proper ventilation of houses.

4. A clause permitting and empowering you, on sufficient medical testimony, to remove, or to call upon the board of guardians to remove, from any lodging-house within the new definition of your Act, any person diseased with fever or other infectious malady, whose continuance there would endanger the lives of other inmates.

5. A clause prohibiting the occupation of underground cellars for the purposes of dwelling.

6. A clause prohibiting the keeping of cattle in or under dwelling-houses.

7. A clause vesting in the commission a right to purchase houses by jury valuation, in any case where they shall determine that such houses are permanently unwholesome and unfit for human habitation, or that their alteration or removal is necessary for the public health.

8. A clause enabling the commission to control all further encroachments on spaces which are now open within the City, so that on ground now (within a certain number of years) unoccupied by buildings, no future erection shall be made, except with the sanction of the commission.

9. A clause to protect the purity and wholesomeness of human food, as sold within the City, by affixing penalties to its exposure for sale in any adulterated, decayed, or corrupted condition, which may impair its fitness for consumption."

THE DECORATION OF THE BUILDING IN HYDE-PARK.

ACCORDING to the request of Mr. Paxton, that I should write down the remarks that I had made to him on the subject of the decorative colouring of the building for the Exhibition, I now apply myself to the task with no feeling of captious criticism, but from the wish to offer my own opinion, as many others have offered theirs, as to what will be the most judicious principle of colouring for giving effect to the building.

Before speaking of the experiments already made, I will commence by saying that no one could have brought to this subject a better knowledge of principles, or expressed it in more clear and elegant terms, than has Mr. Owen Jones in his interesting paper, read before the Institute of British Architects.

I maintain, however, that it is not a question of colours alone, or a philosophical arrangement of them, *but the application of that system of colour that best carries out the constructive features of the building, and conveys to the mind the reality of what it is.*

For this reason particularly I object to the columns being painted yellow, white, and blue. This colouring gives me the idea of their being wood. I cannot think of them, so coloured, as iron columns.

I next consider this colouring with reference to its effect on the eye, and I do believe it will disappoint the expectation of those who now advocate it. The yellow is separated from the blue by a white line, which white, at a short distance from the eye, disappears, softening into the yellow as light, and into the blue as shadow.

Again, as regards the effect of this colouring when thrown into masses: as the columns range in perspective, the yellow outlines will altogether vanish after a certain distance, or, if they are visible, will present the effect of a yellow wall. Nor will the blue stripes prevent this, because in certain situations they will scarcely, if at all, be seen. It may be considered, however, that in many of the spaces between the columns there will be drapery of dark colouring: if these are of subdued tones (which many exhibitors will prefer to set off their goods), the columns will certainly be well defined, but will, I fear, have an appearance of gaudiness.

I now proceed to the consideration of the girders and roof, if I may so call the upper part of the building: here the colouring differs materially from that of the columns, being blue and white, with broad bands of red. If I feared that the colouring of the columns might have an appearance of feebleness, I think that the effect of the masses of red in the girders will have too marked a contrast. In the one case there is no red, in the other there is no yellow; hence there appears a want of sympathy between the columns and the girders, which, as they are both of iron, ought surely to be associated in the colouring.

As regards the roof of glass, which rests like a network on the iron framing, I think it desirable to avoid the heavy marginal lines of red; not being part of the substantial iron construction, but simply a covering, I would have it coloured far more lightly.

Having thus spoken freely of the experiments already made, I offer my own opinion of what the colouring should be. To convey this by writing alone will be somewhat difficult, but I will endeavour to explain the arrangement of colours I propose.

I would have the flats of the columns a pale bronze green, and the circular parts of maroon red,—such a colour as is often given by anti-corrosive paint to ironwork. I separate these two colours by a subdued gold colour line. On the girders I would carry out the same principle, making the framing bronze green, and the braces maroon red, both relieved by light lines. The roof of glass I should like to have nearly untouched by colour, only on the framing would I paint a line of green, sufficient to lead the eye to the parts, without defining them too strongly; on the glass I would put no colour.

The above is what I suggest as the principle of colouring, but in the detail many slight modifications might occur to those who would execute it.

I have devoted much time towards carrying out the objects of the Exhibition; I feel the greatest interest in its success; and, a decorator myself, I hope I may be held excused for thus stepping forward to differ with the experiments of a very able man.

JOHN G. CRACE.

Permit me, from respect to Mr. Owen Jones, to reply to his remarks in your last publication, without the intervention of your friendly correspondent, "Suum Cuique."

To what extent Mr. Owen Jones's proposal for the decoration of the great Exhibition building coincides with my "Hints for the arrangement of Colours in Ancient Decorative Art," may be readily ascertained by a comparison of the report of his lecture, in which the proposal is developed to the Royal Institute of British Architects, with my *brochure*, of which I will gladly transmit a copy to any of your professional readers who may take so much interest in the subject as to apply to me for it.

Mr. Jones states that his opinions, as expressed in the lecture, "were formed in Egypt and the East generally twenty years ago"—"partially printed nine years ago; and delivered in a lecture at the Royal Institution seven years ago." This effectually disposes of the questions of priority of discovery and publication, as my attention has not been directed to the subject longer than six years. I cannot, however, help expressing my regret that these opinions have not been more extensively disseminated for the benefit of British manufacturers, who have laboured to the present time in ignorance, or at least in disregard of them; and though the reason is one of infinitely less importance, that I might have escaped much troublesome and expensive research, in illustration of a subject which I certainly believed that I had restored to modern art, and the mortification of appearing to intrude upon pre-occupied ground. Mr. Jones

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